

Editorial

The effort to yoke science and religion—that is, to address the issues included in this journal's vocation as *zygon*—often comes down to the difficult work of attempting to understand different sets of concepts and their data, with a view to bringing about interrelationships among them. The sets of concepts and data that occupy our attention most often are those of the sciences, philosophy, and theology. In this, the first issue of our twenty-eighth volume, we observe five authors working very hard to understand and interrelate these different sets of concepts.

From Ward Goodenough, we have a study that brings anthropological, archaeological, and neuroscientific research to bear upon the phenomena of beliefs and concepts as such. In a manner of speaking, this article is a companion piece to his piece on theological concepts that appeared here in September 1992. He places the very emergence of beliefs, whether religious beliefs or other kinds, within the evolutionary history of the human species and its predecessor primates. In placing his article first in this issue, we allow his evolutionary vistas to set the stage for this entire issue, suggesting that the reflections presented by the four other authors are themselves part of the evolution of human awareness and search for meaning.

Nancy Frankenberry provides the stage with its philosophical furniture, arguing that Western thought has provided three basic concepts for thinking about God. She elaborates these concepts and submits them to scrutiny from feminist and scientific perspectives. Readers will judge for themselves just what final conclusion is to be drawn from her rigorous and witty analysis, but she certainly leaves us with the sense that the conceptual schemes that Western history has bequeathed to us are quite far from being fully adequate for understanding how theology and science interrelate. Her article sets forth clearly some of the basic criteria by which adequacy in interrelating concepts is to be judged.

Kevin J. Sharpe (mathematician, philosopher, and theologian), Hans Schwarz (theologian), and Philip Hefner (theologian) focus upon different materials but in the end offer three different ways of relating the sets of concepts in question. Sharpe, interpreting the thought of David Bohm, moves directly from the concepts of physics through philosophy to theology. Holomovement, implicate and explicate orders, locality and nonlocality—all of these translate directly into theological concepts pertaining to God: creation, transcendence and immanence, and the personal character of God. Hans Schwarz brings into dialogue scientific and theological perspectives on human morality, and his conclusion is that they are complementary. He finds it undesirable to attempt a direct move between the two sets of concepts but concludes that they need each other. The two sets of concepts should relate cooperatively—those derived from the sciences that interpret morality as a survival mechanism and those derived from theology that point to an agency beyond humanity and its survival that promotes the preservation of life. Theology does not wish to ignore the concrete concerns for survival, nor does it wish for morality to be the object of biological reductionism. In a cooperative mode, both sets of concepts serve humanity well.

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In his study of the traditional concepts of Fall and Original Sin, Philip Hefner envisions a third form of interrelationship between scientific and theological concepts. The traditional myths and doctrines represent a classic reading of the world and the placement of humans in it. Hefner views science as a critical force that refines the traditional religious concepts provided by the myths and doctrine but which also enriches their primordial information. The refined and enriched legacy can be appropriated by contemporary persons and thus deepen their understandings. If Sharpe can be said to represent the most direct move from scientific concepts to theological counterparts, Schwarz's offering may be characterized as that of complementariness and cooperation, while Hefner's is one of critical dialectic.

The readers can observe the efforts of these five authors, as in a fishbowl, and work out their own ways of negotiating the interactions between these three conceptual systems—the sciences, philosophy, and theology.

—Philip Hefner